

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 668
By Burks

A RESOLUTION to honor Mr. Eldon Leslie on the occasion of his retirement from the Cookeville Area-Putnam County Chamber of Commerce.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those citizens who in their years of work have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, Eldon Leslie, President/CEO of the Cookeville Area-Putnam County Chamber of Commerce, is retiring from his position after nearly four decades of selfless and sacrificial service to his community, region, state, and nation; and

WHEREAS, Eldon Leslie has made a greater impact upon his city's and county's growth than any other living person, and his clarity of vision, his tireless efforts, and his myriad contributions as the Chamber's quintessential leader have left an indelible imprint upon countless lives, projects, and events; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, the City Council of Cookeville passed a resolution naming the facility which houses the Cookeville Area-Putnam County Chamber of Commerce the "Leslie Town Centre" to honor Mr. Leslie's exceptional service; and

WHEREAS, Cookeville and Putnam County are also extremely grateful to Mr. Leslie for his vital role in bringing 35 new manufacturing facilities to Cookeville/Putnam County; securing funding for the planning and completion of State Highway 111, enhancing north-south access to the Upper Cumberland Region; spearheading efforts to locate a Nashville State Technical Community College branch in Cookeville; working as Vice Chairman with elected officials from Putnam, Smith, and Wilson counties to establish the Nashville and Eastern Railroad Authority, providing rail service to the three counties; developing the "4th State of Tennessee" program

which promotes industrial development along State Highway 111 corridor between Hamilton and Pickett Counties; establishing the Chamber's Adopt-a-School program; envisioning and providing leadership for the formation of the Leadership Putnam program; establishing and developing the funding mechanism for the Putnam Travel Development Council; and providing vision and leadership for the development of the Cookeville/Putnam County Clean Commission; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, he was the recipient of the prestigious Fred Harris Lifetime Achievement Award from the Tennessee Industrial Development Council, becoming only the third recipient in the history of the award; and

WHEREAS, a small business retailer for nearly half a century, he is a former President of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Executives and a Chartering Director of the U.S. Southeast-Japan Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leslie has earned deserved recognition for his community contributions, including such prestigious awards as the Louis Johnson Award and the Business Leadership Award, given by Tennessee Technological University College of Business Administration Foundation, and the Community Service Award in recognition of his service to the University; he has been honored by having a library named for him at the Cookeville Campus of Nashville State Technical Community College, and his friends and associates have endowed a significant scholarship fund of \$80,000 at Tennessee Technological University; and

WHEREAS, in addition to unequivocally serving the State of Tennessee, Mr. Leslie was a citizen advisor to President Jimmy Carter on the Panama Canal treaties, was involved in discussions involving SALT II treaties, and was an appointee to the Ohio River Basin Commission during President Carter's administration; and

WHEREAS, Eldon Leslie has given meritorious aid to eight Tennessee governors through five decades, beginning in the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Eldon Leslie exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Mr. Leslie has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his colleagues and the good people of Cookeville and Putnam County; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we recognize and honor Mr. Eldon Leslie on the occasion of his retirement from the Cookeville Area-Putnam County, Chamber of Commerce, salute his singular career in public service, acknowledge our own debt of gratitude for his excellent representation in many quarters and countries, and extend to him our very best wishes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the sincere thanks of this General Assembly accompany Eldon Leslie as a badge of honor into his retirement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy